

items but both insect and plant food appeared to be taken. The bird was faithful to a very sandy area of sloping ground, although a pedestrian route across the golf course was close by.

### Status and distribution

Temminck's Horned Lark is generally considered a resident, prone to occasional dispersal. Accidentals have been reported outside of the species' usual range, between north-west Mauritania across North Africa to north and east Arabia, Syria, and east and south-west Iraq<sup>1-3</sup>, in Malta, Lebanon<sup>2</sup> and Yemen<sup>4</sup>. This appears to constitute not only the first record for The Gambia, but also for anywhere in Africa south of the Sahara.

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## Second confirmed record of Forbes's Plover *Charadrius forbesi* for The Gambia

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En février 2002 un Pluvier de Forbes *Charadrius forbesi* a été observé sur la côte gambienne. Ceci ne constitue que la deuxième mention confirmée pour le pays. L'examen de spécimens au Royaume Uni semble indiquer qu'il s'agissait d'un adulte en plumage intermédiaire.

Forbes's Plover *Charadrius forbesi* occurs in savannas of western Central Africa<sup>2</sup>, breeding in rocky upland areas of Nigeria in March–August<sup>3</sup> and July–August in Ghana<sup>5</sup>. It is known to move short distances from its breeding grounds and to undertake longer journeys, although the routes involved are not understood<sup>2</sup>. The only confirmed record from The Gambia is of one at Bansang (13°26'N 14°39'W) in Central River Division, on 23 November 1979<sup>1,4</sup>. There is also an unconfirmed January record from coastal Western Division, and records in south and east Senegal in February<sup>1,6</sup>.

On 6 February 2002, GK and a small group of British birders spent a day with CB in Western Division of The Gambia. During mid-afternoon some of the group spent time watching Palearctic shorebirds on a muddy pool behind the beach at Tujering (13°19'N 16°47'W) in south Gambia on the Atlantic coast. The seasonal pool was bordered by vegetation dominated by *Tamarisk pentandra* and while searching through numbers of Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Wood Sandpiper *T. glareola* and Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*, GK saw a small wader alight and CB immediately identified it as a Forbes's Plover. CB has recent experience of the species from Guinea-Bissau and Guinea Conakry, both in October, in stonier, lateritic grasslands at higher altitudes. We obtained prolonged, close views of the bird in good light. The main question was the bird's age. A few wing feathers appeared to have

pale fringes, which are just visible in Fig 1, suggesting that it may not have been a full adult. After c10 minutes the bird flew off, uttering a double call as it departed. On 10 February 2002 at 08.00 hrs CB and Paul Manners visited the same site and found the bird still present. It moved between two areas, the muddy pool and a drier part some 250 m away. PM took a series of photographs and CB obtained a short sound recording of the flight call.

On returning to the UK, GK visited the Natural History Museum (Tring) to examine skins of Forbes's Plover (35 specimens). About 50% had been collected in Nigeria, with most other records from other West African countries (Sierra Leone, Liberia, 'Gold Coast', 'British Cameroon' and Côte d'Ivoire), and two taken in 'north Rhodesia' and 'west Tanganyika' (country names within quotes appear as on the relevant specimen labels). The birds had been collected in most months, with the majority of the breeders taken in May. Many of the non-breeding adults, labelled as having been caught in December–February, had some pale feather fringes, especially on the secondaries and inner primaries, like those on the Gambian bird. The Gambian bird also had the following features that appear to eliminate the possibility of it being a juvenile (see Fig 1): no pale fringes to the mantle or scapular feathers, a black (not brown) breast-band and grey (not buff) face and throat. GK concluded that the observed bird was an adult in non-breeding plumage. The sexes are similar<sup>7</sup>.

This constitutes the second confirmed record of Forbes's Plover in the Gambia<sup>1</sup>.

## Acknowledgements

Dr Robert Prys-Jones kindly permitted GK to inspect skins at the Natural History Museum (Tring), Paul Manners supplied the photograph, and Colin McKerrow also observed the bird and made supporting notes.

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# Red-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus ruficollis*, new to Burkina Faso

Bruno Portier

La nuit du 15 mars 2001 a été observé au Ranch de gibier de Nazinga (c11°10'N 01°35'W) au sud du Burkina Faso, un engoulement inhabituel pour la région. Une description de l'oiseau et du biotope sont données. Identifié comme Engoulement à collier roux *Caprimulgus ruficollis*, il s'agit de la première mention connue de ce migrateur paléarctique pour le Burkina Faso.

**O**n the evening of 15 March 2001, I observed an unfamiliar nightjar c2 km east of the tourist campground at Nazinga Game Ranch (c11°10'N 01°35'W), in Burkina Faso, 200 km south of Ouagadougou on the Ghana border. It was resting in the centre of a dirt road, where I observed it in the beam of my car headlights, approaching it to within 10 m to examine its plumage in detail through binoculars. It flew off after c30 seconds and was not seen again.

A large, grey-brown nightjar, it was noticeably larger than Standard-winged *Macrodipteryx longipennis* and Long-tailed Nightjars *Caprimulgus climacurus*, both common at Nazinga, with a broad rufous hindneck collar, brighter than on Standard-winged Nightjar. A white malar stripe reached the ear-coverts and there was a conspicuous, large white throat patch. Buff tips to the scapulars and upper wing-coverts formed 4–5 contrasting pale bars. The tail was fairly long, square ended and barred, extending well beyond the wingtips. In flight, it had white patches near the wingtips, on the outer primaries, and broad white tips to the outertail feathers.

It readily differed from the four nightjar species previously known from the ranch. Apart from its smaller size, Standard-winged Nightjar differs in its less contrasting plumage markings and much shorter tail. Long-tailed

Nightjar was excluded by its small size and long, graduated tail. Plain Nightjar *Caprimulgus inornatus* has very different, pale and plain overall coloration, whereas Freckled Nightjar *C. tristigma* is overall much darker. The wing and tail patches excluded a possible vagrant Pennant-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx vexillarius*. It also differed from European Nightjar *C. europaeus* in having a larger white throat patch, more spotted wing-coverts, a diagnostic rufous nuchal collar, paler and more variegated plumage, with no dark grey/black coloration on the shoulders. I therefore identified it as a male Red-necked Nightjar *C. ruficollis*, probably of the nominate form.

Vegetation at Nazinga is dominated by shrub and tree savannas (Northern Guinea Savanna), with *Vitellaria paradoxa* and *Combretum glutinosum*, patches of wooded savanna (*Isobertinia doka*, *Azzeria africana*, *Anogeissus leiocarpus*) and some riparian forest along major drainage channels. Climate is characterised by annual rainfall of c1,000 mm and a six-month dry season.

Red-necked Nightjar is a rare to uncommon Palearctic winter visitor in West Africa, known from Mauritania, north Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Liberia, north Côte d'Ivoire and north Ghana<sup>1</sup>, and, most recently, north-east Nigeria<sup>5</sup>. Though Burkina Faso is included in